The treatise of Dr. Dunglison constitutes, unquestionably, a most excellent text-book for the use of students in the departments of medical science of which it treats. It presents a very faithful and able digest of the leading results of modern observation and reflection on the important questions of the action, mode of operation, and therapeutic effects of the principal articles of the materia medica; with a brief sketch of the natural and commercial history of the drugs in common use. Nor will the treatise be found unworthy of the notice of the practitioner as a ready and trustworthy book of reference, when the time and opportunity for consulting many and more copious works is wanting.

With his usual industry and accuracy, Dr. Dunglison, in the preparation of the present edition, has, besides thoroughly revising that portion of the treatise which relates to pharmacology, paid due attention to the facts and trustworthy observations, in reference to the several subjects embraced within its scope, that have been recorded, either at home or abroad, since the appearance of the last edition, so as to render it a faithful epitome of the existing condition of general therapeutics and materia medica. D. F. C.

Art. XXIII.—*Institutions for the Insane, in Prussia, Austria, and Germany.* By Pliny Earle, M. D., one of the Visiting Physicians to the Lunatic Asylum of the City of New York, &c. Utica, 1853. 8vo. pp. 229.

In the volume before us, Dr. Earle gives, in an interesting form, the record of a very extensive personal examination of many of the numerous institutions for the insane in Prussia, Austria, and Germany.

Familiar as we have become with all the prominent hospitals for the treatment of mental disease in Great Britain and France, only a limited number beyond these countries have been seen by any of our professional men, who have visited Europe for the purpose of profiting by the improvements which, within the last twenty or thirty years, have been introduced into most of these institutions. "A general impression appeared to prevail, indicated, it is true, more by negative than positive signs, that, aside from the countries mentioned, the nations of Europe had made but little progress in this department of the profession, and hence could furnish us nothing commensurate with the labour and expense necessary to its acquisition," and yet the literature of the Germans on this branch of medicine is able and voluminous. Much of it is, perhaps, unprofitable, as being devoted to a zealous advocacy of specious theories, but still containing a great amount of valuable information, and exhibiting very strikingly the talent and industry which, in that region, are devoted to the study of mental diseases.

Various institutions for the care of the insane, too, are to be found, throughout these countries, which have a deservedly high character for their liberal arrangements, and the admirable manner in which their whole service is performed.

During the summer of 1849, Dr. Earle visited many of these institutions, under peculiarly favourable circumstances for obtaining a knowledge of their actual condition. Long devoted to the study of diseases of the mind, and for several years engaged in the superintendence of a large American Hospital, he went abroad with a degree of practical knowledge of the subject, and a familiarity with the wants of such establishments, which rendered him well qualified to judge of the excellences, as well as the defects, which are to be found in abundance in the different German institutions.

The first chapter of the work before us is devoted to a brief history of insanity in Germany, of the German periodical and other literature on the subject, and an interesting notice of the prominent men who have been distinguished in this specialty—which, although receiving only a brief notice at our hands, will well repay an attentive perusal.

The following estimate of German hospitals, as compared with our own, is interesting:—

"A large proportion of the buildings occupied as hospitals or asylums for the insane in Germany, were formerly monastic establishments. Their architectural arrangements are not only of a former age, but were adapted to a different purpose, and hence are less convenient than most of our institutions. Still, their conversion into asylums for the insane has already been productive of at least one advantage. It has accustomed the officers of these institutions to large rooms, so that, in the construction of new buildings, the principle of providing accommodations for the greatest number of patients in the least possible space does not enter into consideration. It is really a delightful treat to see the large, well-lighted, and airy corridors of Eichburg and the asylum at Halle. The number of cubic feet of inclosed space in the principal German institutions is probably not less than twice as great, in proportion to the number of patients, as those in the United States. Such asylums as have been recently erected, and specially designed for the purpose—as, for example, those of Halle, Illenau, and Eichburg—are great improvements upon the others, and yet, in point of convenience, are unequal to some of ours. In their asylums generally, the apartments for patients have not that finished aspect of comfort which is found in many of the American institutions. This is particularly owing to the universal absence of carpets. Yet, relatively to the prevailing customs of the people, they are probably as well furnished as ours. In the conveniences of the kitchen, the laundry, and the means of distributing food throughout the house, they are inferior. Cooking is rarely done by steam. I saw no wringing-press, and no dumb-waiter. Mechanical appliances for the purpose of bodily restraint, are probably somewhat more extensively used than upon this side of the Atlantic."

It appears that, during this visit, Dr. Earle found several establishments in which he was shown through only a portion of the wards, and occasionally he had no opportunity of seeing those for violent patients. We trust few, if any, American superintendents can be found but that will cordially agree with Dr. Earle, that when a professional brother, engaged in the same specialty, visits an establishment for the purpose of becoming familiar with its arrangements, it is a duty, and ought to be a pleasure, to conduct him through every ward, and to throw open every part for his inspection. The credit should be given such a visitor that he comes "to learn the advantages of the institution, not to seek for demerits or matters for cavil."

In regard to moral treatment, Dr. E. considers the German asylums fully equal to those of the United States. "In the most important point of all—if reference be had to curative treatment, or the quietude, order, and hygienic condition of the patients—that of manual employment for the inmates, they are superior. The radical source of this superiority lies, undoubtedly, not in the more ardent wishes, or the greater efforts, of their superintendents for the welfare of their patients—for, in these respects, none can excel the officers of the American asylums—but in the education of the people, and the nature of the political governments under which they live. Obedience to authority becomes, by education, more a matter of principle or of habit. Furthermore, the asylums are more independent than ours, and the retention and management of patients more optional with the officers."

Of the forty-nine public, and eight private, establishments of which mention is made, and a more or less extended description given, in the volume before us, seventeen were visited by Dr. E. They embraced those of Sieberg, Andernach, Eberbach, Frankfort, Dusseldorf, Hildesheim, Halle, Berlin, Sonnenstein, Leubus, Brieg, Vienna, Hall, Giesing, Winnenthal, Illenau, and Stephansfield. Nine of these are among the thirteen which Dr. Julius calls the best in Germany.

Want of space prevents our giving a more extended notice of the author's visit, or referring to the many interesting facts and judicious criticisms scattered through the volume. We can heartily commend the work to the attention of all who take an interest in the insane, or are disposed to become familiar with the views of prominent German physicians on this important subject, and

to learn from a competent observer the actual condition of the various institutions which, in that wide and populous region, are specially devoted to the treatment of the various forms of mental disease. T. S. K.

ART. XXIV.—*Dental Chemistry and Metallurgy: Chemistry and Metallurgy, as applied to the Study and Practice of Dental Surgery.* By A. SNOWDEN PIGGOT, M.D. Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1854. Pp. 516.

THIS new work is designed to fill a vacancy in the dental library, and meet a pressing want of the profession. Its author gives ample proof of the sufficiency of his resources, and exhibits great skill in their employment for the special use intended. For practical purposes, it has the character of a manual and operative directory; and for instruction in the scientific relations of his theme, it could scarcely be more judiciously and profitably executed. It is neither incumbered nor deficient in chemical science. It at once guides the operative dentist in the details of his every-day work, and teaches the student the principles directly involved in the philosophy of his profession. The liberal learning and the practical art of dentistry are alike provided for, with a perspicuity, compass, and exactitude that are worthy of high commendation. In the first book, "The Ultimate Chemical Elements of the Human Body" are well presented for the general purposes of the work. In the second, we have "The Chemistry of Digestion." These departments, which occupy one hundred and fifty pages of the treatise, are clearly necessary to the dentist who would understand the functional agencies which affect the organs whose diseases he must understand and treat. The general principles of organic chemistry must necessarily form the basis of a successful investigation of any of its specialties, and it is quite impossible to understand the fluids of the mouth, and the processes which take place in it, without some knowledge of those ulterior stages of digestion with which its functions are directly connected. These introductory divisions of the work are, therefore, of primary importance in the discussion of the subjects which are the specific aim of the work. The third book is occupied with "The Chemistry of the *Mouth*"—the teeth, saliva, the morbid changes of saliva, in all their forms; mucous and salivary calculi. The fourth book is upon "The Chemistry and Metallurgy of the Metals and Earths used by the Dentist;" the first chapter—on the different methods of applying heat, furnaces, and auxiliary apparatus—illustrated by a large number of well-executed engravings. The remaining ten chapters are upon as many metals, their alloys, compounds, and behaviour in the processes to which they must be subjected.

The chapters on gold and silver, and especially the tables of the coinage of different nations and dates, showing their weight, fineness, and value, are of great importance every way, but particularly in enabling the mechanical dentist to avoid those crystalline, unmalleable alloys that prove so troublesome in practice, as well as ascertain the exact composition of the plate, are matters of very great moment. To all this are added seven or eight chapters on the materials used in making incorruptible teeth, the colouring matters, and the preparation of the materials.

The work, it will be seen by this brief synopsis, is a full one, well and methodically arranged. It appears to us to be as well treated as it is planned, and we are satisfied it will contribute handsomely to that commendable effort which the profession is now making to liberalize and elevate its study and practice.

The publishers have got out the book in their best style. E. T.